

# An Alternative View

by Molly Johnson

"So jam on, jam out, jam it in, till it feels like it's a sin. And that's only when you begin to improve."

--Blues Traveler

In light of the controversy surrounding the possible sale of KAUR to Minnesota Public Radio, I felt it my duty as an American citizen and an advocate of alternative music to defend the integrity of the airwaves. Much of the discussion on the subject so far has revolved around the importance of the station to Augustana students. In this respect, KAUR is undoubtedly essential to the learning experience at the college. Another less-mentioned aspect of the issue is the actual broadcast material that KAUR presents. Our devotion to alternative music is an integral ingredient in the cultural recipe of Sioux Falls.

Money magazine pronounced Sioux Falls the No.1 place to live in the United States this year. During their assessment, however, the magazine found that we had lower marks in the area of culture. They didn't find enough variety and opportunity for arts and entertainment. The keys to

improvement in this category are diversity and choice. If we eliminate the only main alternative music station, we further limit the choices that we have. Basically, the removal would allow Top 40 playlists to rule supreme, virtually cutting Sioux Falls off completely from any exposure to alternative bands. It makes little difference what type of music most residents prefer. Even if 3/4 of the town wants Top 40 music, they should appreciate and support the existence of options. The more we allow our "leaders" to limit our choices, the more of our individuality we also surrender.

Furthermore, our city does want KAUR to exist; according to the latest Tempest Reader's Poll, it is the station of choice. I wonder how many of those supporters would mind if KAUR became a 24-hour news and information show. Oh joy. MPR says that there is widespread support for this type of format. This support base obviously doesn't represent college students and our genre. If the college really had student's interests at heart, they would not allow MPR to take away the definition of college radio and drastically change the entire format of the station.

Also, MPR's actions are reprehensible. Augustana College sponsors KRSD because it is a public service station. This alliance appears to represent the two institutions working together to aid the public. If MPR was really an ally, they would not take away our frequency to acquire a commercial station that advances their own goals. If MPR took over the station, the least they could do, to be considerate to the college, would be to keep the alternative college format.

Although there is considerable support for the effort to save KAUR, I've observed a lot of indifference. Some students simply do not care because they will be graduating soon, so it won't affect them. Unfortunately, it's very easy to forego action on an issue that won't ever make our own lives better. This way of thinking, though, is convoluted and counterproductive. To prevent others from controlling our lives in the future, we must make sacrifices today. Don't fall into the trap of apathy.

"Oh, save me, save me from tomorrow, I don't want to sail with this ship of fools."

--World Party